

Friis, John

From: Saul Fussiner [professorfussiner@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, March 15, 2009 10:17 PM
To: Friis, John
Subject: HB6666, Section 5

March 15, 2009

To whom it may concern,

I am a former ECA theatre student who has gone on to teach film studies at Hunter College and screenwriting at ECA, and I am now a certified Social Studies teacher in New Haven.

I want to urge you not to require certification for the ECA teachers. This would destroy the school, because teaching artists would not certify to teach in a ten hour a week program. What you would wind up with would be non-artists who are certified teachers and couldn't get a full-time job elsewhere.

If the state were to short-sightedly force all teachers to be certified it would defeat the purpose of an arts high school, which is to expose students to artists who are actively engaged in the professional arts world.

To make an analogy to another vocational program, who would you rather teach car mechanics to high school students: a member of the pit crew for an Indy 500 car, or a full time teacher who hadn't worked in the professional environment for years? Would you rather gym teachers be full time, or be actively training for the olympics?

Preparing students for vocational work requires students who are actively involved in those vocations. The arts have, since the start of the enlightenment, been apprenticeship fields, and should remain that way.

Saul Fussiner
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